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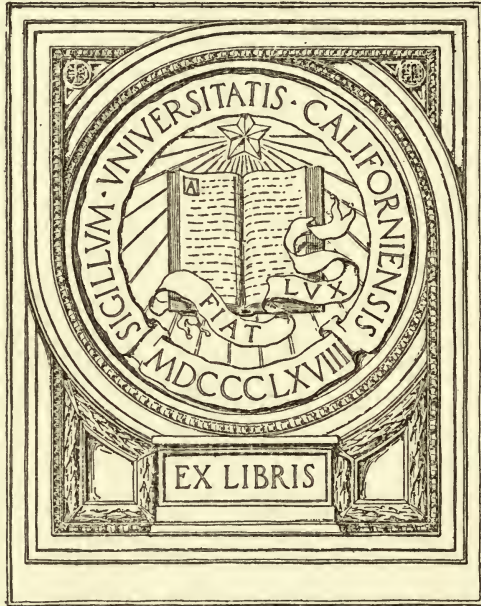
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HEARTS AWAKE



AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR

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BY AMELIA JOSEPHINE BURR

HEARTS AWAKE
THE SILVER TRUMPET
SYLVANDER AND CLARINDA
LIFE AND LIVING
IN DEEP PLACES
THE ROADSIDE FIRE

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

HEARTS
AWAKE

THE PIXY

A Play
by
Amelia Josephine
Burr



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George H. Doran Company

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Eng. Almon

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TO J.

"A Comrade's troth is the Romany gold
And we're taking the road together."

470038

Some of the poems in this volume are reprinted by courtesy of "Everybody's Magazine," "The Outlook," "The Bellman," "Reedy's Mirror," "The Century," "The Poetry Journal," "Life," "The Woman's Home Companion," "Scribner's Magazine," "The Bookman," and "The Masque of Poets," in which they originally appeared.

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HEARTS AWAKE

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OUR FLAG

OF old it was our heritage, the red and white
and blue.

Our grandsires died to raise it and our sires
to keep it true.

We prayed we might be worthy of their
memory as we cast

In starry beauty to the wind the banner of
our past,

But now—O God, we name to Thee our liv-
ing and our dead.

Bone of our bone the white has grown, flesh
of our flesh the red.

Our substance and our souls we pledge to
keep it undefiled.

Of old it was our heritage—to-day it is our
child.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR

WHAT is my home to me, if I shut out the
city?

What is my country to me, if I take no
thought for the world?

What is my friend to me, if I am cold to
mankind?

What is my conscience to me, if I forget
God?

SERBIA TO AMERICA

1918

HARK, from the East a keen and bitter cry—
New tears are flowing in the furrows of
old sorrow.

On your wasted fields your dead lie like
fallen leaves.

Only the Pale Harvester garners heavy
sheaves—

How have you the courage to struggle
toward to-morrow,

Serbia, Serbia, land that will not die?

I have stood for Freedom—Freedom
cannot perish.

I have stood for Honor—Honor must
endure.

But my children starve, the children
who should cherish

SERBIA TO AMERICA (continued)

For the world's to-morrow my spirit
flaming-pure.

You who sit in safety, you whose babes
are fed,

You who by the peril of other men are
free,

Listen to my living ere the hour be
sped,

Lest you hear forever the silence of my
dead.

Serbia, Serbia, God hears. Do we?

NEW ENGLAND FISHING SONG, 1918

DOES he think to scare us from sailing by a
threat of death on the sea?

It's little the man at Potsdam knows of
such men as we.

We have wrested our living so long from
the grip of the jealous waves

That half of the stones in our churchyard
mark no graves.

We do not ask to be coffined where we were
born and bred,

Nor our women whimper and cringe when
they cannot bury their dead.

Now that the weal of the world comes to
our nets with the cod,

We who could dare for ourselves, shall we
play the coward for God?

Let them sink a score of our fleets, we will
sail, and sail again.

It's little the man at Potsdam knows of New
England men!

A PRIEST OF FRANCE

HE was too old to fight, they said—
But though the frost was on his head
The holy fire was in his heart;
So as an Aumonier he came,
Bold as a paladin aflame
To honor his beloved's name
By playing well a hero's part.

There was no weariness for him.
His faded eyes were never dim
In finding where the wounded lay.
His frail old limbs were strong to plod
Across the marsh of bloody sod
That none might go uncheered to God
Without His love to light the way.

So often at the final word
A woman's name was what he heard;

A PRIEST OF FRANCE (continued)

Then he said tenderly, "I know—"
His eyes grown wistful for the sight
Of a little dingy church, all bright
With candles for a holy night,
Our Lady smiling in the glow.

At last an obus had its will—
One leg was torn away, but still
Among the dying he crawled on.
Another shot—this time he fell
And could not rise . . . he heard his bell
Ringing the Angelus . . . out of hell
And into Heaven, he was gone.

Little and dingy, but the light
Of candles falls by day and night
Upon a soldier's medal there
Set shrine-like by the chancel side,
For to the Church that was his bride,
Whose lover he had lived and died,
France gave his Croix de Guerre.

A ROSE FOR FRANCE

(A True Story)

SOLDIERS three at a county fair;
Soldiers—the eldest is only a boy—
Come to saunter and smile and stare
And perhaps to let the girls enjoy
The set of the khaki new and smart
On the strong young shoulders held so
square.

Clean and sturdy of limb and heart,
Soldiers three at a county fair.

A Red Cross booth where the workers sit
All in white, and among them three
Gentle old women who knit and knit
In a quaint sweet dress from over the sea—
Sorrowful flotsam of ravaged France,
Under their kerchiefs woes untold,

A ROSE FOR FRANCE (continued)

And their capfrills hide from the careless
glance
The patient eyes of the stricken old.

How should a boy's heart understand
The glory and grief of those knitters gray?
A moment's halt for the blithe young band,
Then they drift with the crowd away—
Ah, but see! they are back again,
A crimson rose in the hand of each,
And slowly, clumsily, as it were pain
To put his soul into speech.

“We fellows thought—” so the eldest spoke
With a flush that burned to his close-cropped
hair,

“That the old French ladies—” his young
voice broke—

“Should have a posy to wear.”

France, O France! did you feel that day
The beating heart of this land of ours
Close at your side in the heat of the fray,—
Our love in the blood-red flowers?

A ROSE FOR FRANCE (continued)

Those lads — and others — shall bring,
 maybe,
A brighter rose to your breast, O France,
When shoulder to shoulder the foe shall see
Your sons and our own advance—
The rose you have scattered ungrudgingly
On the fields where at last we may bear our
 part—
A rose with the thorns of Calvary,
And its root in a mother's heart.

CAREY'S MEN

THEIR hearts were hot as youth's with generous fire
To give their utmost—wisdom said, too late;
But destiny cried Yea to their desire,
And fearlessly they grasped the hand of fate.
Between the Prussian tyrant and his goal
The line of Britain's army broke—and then
Arose a land's imperishable soul
And England's laborers were Carey's Men.

Theirs was the task to build the roads for feet
On the great march against the power of Mars.
They asked not if the drudgery were sweet,
They only did it—till the kindly stars
Decreed they too should taste the uttermost

CAREY'S MEN (continued)

Of sacrifice's costly joy, and then
Shouting they leaped exultant to their post,
And Yankee engineers were Carey's Men.

Scabbarded swords that God alone can know
The temper of, we live our days, and then
For each of us, at last, His bugles blow.
Grant us to meet Thy test like Carey's
Men!

(Brigadier General Sandeman Carey held the gap between the Third and Fifth British Armies in the first days of the German drive in Picardy with a hastily organized force of Labor Battalions, Engineers, and any one else in reach.)

THE TROOP TRAIN

I

A HEAD of them the ocean with its devil-
haunted miles,
Those brown young faces with their brave,
strained smiles,
And I must show a good cheer and wave
as they go past
Because of all their Godspeeds mine may be
the last.

Father of all free men, be Thou their
strength and shield
In the perils of the furlough and the perils
of the field!
Clean and strong and beautiful, bring them
back again,

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

Those dear boyish faces at the windows of
the train!

Yes, and make me worthy to welcome them
that day—

To wave to them as gallantly as when they
went away,

Saying, "Smiling I may greet you, for I
have done my share.

Here have I been faithful, as you were faith-
ful there."

2

THEY used to thunder sorrow in the night,
Those heavy troop-trains passing—and by
day,

When I stood waving to the windows bright
With brave boy faces, it was hard to show
A spirit worthy of their greeting gay.

But now the wheels are singing as they go—
There's the Arizona cowboy who is home-
sick for the rancho

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

And the yelp of a coyote where the Gila
waters run.

There's the laughing lad from Oregon with
cheeks like Portland roses

And a wound stripe that he got in the Ar-
gonne.

There's the Louisiana Frenchman with a
golden star to witness

How he left his pleasant rice-fields with the
first to volunteer.

There's the ace from Minneapolis who
broke a German prison,

And it's only by a miracle he's here.

There's the Indiana circus-clown whose
tumbling days are over,

But the soul of him is stronger than his
spine can ever be.

There's the blue-eyed boy from Georgia,
with a drawl like golden syrup,

And his buddy who is bound for Tennessee.

There's the lean keen Yankee fighter who is
going back to battle

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

With briefs instead of bullets at his place on
Beacon Street.

There's the lad who offered Liberty his
clean young mind and body,
And who smiles because she only took his
feet.

There's the sergeant who swore off ten
years to get himself in khaki,
And his wound would not have lamed him if
he hadn't been so old.

There's the fellow with the Croix de Guerre
who hides it in his pocket—

It's a long, long trail to get that story told!
There's the boy whose eyes are dark with
incommunicable horror—

No scar upon his body but his heart has felt
the flame—

While another went through hell without a
scorch upon his spirit

And his mother's eyes will find him still the
same.

From Atlantic to Pacific, from Dakota down
to Texas,

THE TROOP TRAIN (continued)

America is listening for those wheels upon
the road.

Hearts are beat for beat with them and
prayers are keeping time with them.

O Father, bless the troop trains and their
load!

To the forest, to the mountain, to the prairie
and the mesa,

To the silver southern beaches and the
Maine rocks cold with foam,

To the loving hearts that wait behind the
star-flag in the window,

The boys are going home—home—home!

HOW SHALL WE KNOW YOU?

LADS who went laughing where your comrades died—

Maimed though you were, whose spirit did not swerve—

When the worn uniforms are laid aside,
How shall we know you, lads we love to serve?

To all men who go haltingly in pain
We must be quick in kindness, lest it be
That one of those who saved us ask in vain
Our thanks for what he gave so willingly.

All blindness henceforth we must sacred hold

Lest we slight one on whom the shadow fell
In holier crusade than those of old,
At Chateau-Thierry or at St. Mihiel,

HOW SHALL WE KNOW YOU? (continued)

And every troubled life that walks apart,
Darkened as by mysterious poison-smoke,
We dare not judge lest we misjudge a heart
Which bore the sacrificial fire—and broke.

So high the cost that we should understand
True brotherhood—has it at last sufficed?
Show us, Lord Love, thy wound in every
hand—

In every heart the shadow of the Christ!

NOT BY BREAD ALONE

HE laughed aloud to see the table spread.
For all his khaki and his three gold bars,
Yes, and the scars
On his thin face, he still was such a boy,
So frankly simple in the greedy joy
With which he ate his supper, that I smiled
For happy thankfulness that all war's harms
And horrors had no power to blight in him
The everlasting Child.
"Home cooking will taste good to you," I
said.
He paused with lifted fork, distended cheek,
And wistful eyes that made my own grow
dim.
"If I could just get Mother in my arms
I wouldn't ask to eat, not for a week!"

RESTORATION

THEY look upon us through the mystic door,
Those who have passed, those who shall
 come to birth,
Waiting for us, the living, to restore
Beauty and fruitfulness to ravaged earth.
Where there were trees there must be trees
 again,
Sweet servants of the soil's imperious needs,
Because the Spring must not return in vain
Nor Autumn's bounty waste itself in weeds.
Where there was hope there must again be
 hope,
Undaunted beauty shining through the
 scars,
Because however men may fall and grope
They must not lose the everlasting stars.
It were the work of angels to revive
The orchard's fragrant ecstasy of flowers,

RESTORATION (continued)

To bid the murdered forest wake alive—
The work of angels—and God makes it ours.
A still diviner labor to reflower
The spirit's orchards after hate's red blight,
And He, the Lord of Life, who understands
All things, has laid it in our faltering hands.
O Will of God, upon our hands be power!
O Love of God, within our hearts be light!

MR. VALIANT PASSES OVER

(January 6, 1919)

WHEN the Post came and told him that at
last

The pitcher that so faithfully and long
Had served his fellow-creatures in their
thirst

Was broken at the fountain, Valiant said:
"I am going to my Father's; and although
Not easily I came to where I am,
My pains upon the journey were well
spent.

My sword I give to him who shall succeed
My pilgrim steps upon the Royal Road;
My courage and my skill I leave to him
Who can attain them—but my marks and
scars

I carry with me for my King to see
As witness of His battles that I fought."

MR. VALIANT PASSES OVER (continued)

As he went down into the river, many
Stood on the bank and heard him say: "O
death,
Where is thy sting?" And as the water
grew
Deeper—"O grave, where is thy victory?"
So he passed over, and the trumpets all
Sounded for him upon the other side.

John Bunyan, did you laugh in para-
dise
For joy to-day, to see your dream
come true?

JOYCE KILMER

SURELY the saints you loved visibly came
To welcome you, that day in Picardy—
Stephen whose dying eyes beheld his Lord,
Michael, a living blade of crystal flame,
And all the flower of heavenly chivalry
Smiling upon you, calling you by name.
Leaving your body like a broken sword
You went with them—and now, beyond our
sight,
Still in the ranks of God you sing and fight,
For death to you was one more victory.

SINGERS IN THE SERVICE

WE who are called arise
To an imperious unaccustomed toil
And lay aside the garments that we wore
Trailing the quiet years that went before—
The old serenities
And the familiar beauty. To the soil
We go, to elemental force and stress,
To own and to defy our weariness;
And we breathe beauty where we never
thought
Beauty could be, and brotherhood un-
sought
Is warm in us, who wished for it amiss
And coldly at our ease—how long ago!
We live, who sang of life we did not know.
And more than all our loss and gain, we
see
Another age, the happy heir of this—

SINGERS IN THE SERVICE (continued)

Children of the future, clean and free,
Wearing with new majesty the dear
Familiar beauty that we laid aside;
In their illumined eyes
Fixed holy stars, the old serenities;
Before their joyous feet a way made clear
By the great strife where we saw God—
and died.

NIGHT MAGIC

(A Lie-Awake Song)

THE apples falling from the tree
Make such a heavy bump at night
I always am surprised to see
They are so little, when it's light;

AND all the dark just sings and sings
So loud, I cannot see at all
How frogs and crickets and such things
That make the noise, can be so small.

THEN my own room looks larger, too—
Corners so dark and far away—
I wonder if things really do
Grow up at night and shrink by day?

FOR I dream sometimes, just as clear,
I'm bigger than the biggest men—
Then mother says, "Wake up, my dear!"
And I'm a little boy again.

ROMANY GOLD

THERE'S a crackle of brown on the leaf's
crisp edge
And the goldenrod blooms have begun to
feather.
We're two jolly vagabonds under a hedge
By the dusty road together.

COULD an emperor boast such a house as
ours,
The sky for a roof and for couch the clover?
Does he sleep as well under silken flowers
As we, when the day is over?

HE sits at ease at his table fine
With the richest of meat and drink before
him.
I eat my crust with your hand in mine,

ROMANY GOLD (continued)

And your eyes are cups of a stronger wine
Than any his steward can pour him.

WHAT if the autumn days grow cold?
Under one cloak we can brave the
weather.
A comrade's troth is the Romany gold,
And we're taking the road together.

THE ROMANY SIGN

OVER the hills with the Romany train
Through the sweet wet woods and the
whispering rain,
Looking back through veils of gray
To the roofs of the town where we paused
to-day.

There in the crowded market-place
Is a Romany heart with a Gorgio face.
Where did you find the heart of my clan
Under the shadow of roof and spire?
Did your mother dream of a Romany man
In the house of your Gorgio sire?
Even so shall you dream of me
When you light the hearth for a fair white
bride—

Of a path untrodden, a door untried,
And an hour that is never to be.
I have set my patteran

THE ROMANY SIGN (continued)

Deep in your Romany heart.
I broke a branch from my tree of life
Where the sweetest buds had begun to
start—
And they never shall bloom, but they never
shall fall.
Wide are the ways of your feet and mine—
It's the market-place for the Gorgio face,
And the roof, and the spire, and the fair
white wife.
I'm over the hills with the Romany chal,
And there's never a fire shall warm us twain
The width of a world apart.
But—what is a world to the Romany heart
That follows the Romany sign?

CALYPSO

WANDERER, we must part—so the gods
decree.

You must go again to Ithaca.

The cold green waves shall wash you of
the memory of me,

Breaking on the coast of Ithaca.

Built we a house of dreams, beautiful in
seeming,

But for those the Thunderer wakes, there
is no more dreaming.

Go now, spread your sail, turn your prow
to sea—

Yonder lies the way to Ithaca.

THEIRS is to obey, whom the gods com-
mand—

Holy is the hearth in Ithaca.

Home and harvest are waiting for your
hand—

CALYPSO (continued)

Fruitful are the fields of Ithaca.
Love the life you chose while it still is yours
for living,
Lest the gods take back again the treasures
of their giving.
Passes our joy like our footprints in the
sand—
Granite are the cliffs of Ithaca.

I HAVE sent him back, at the gods'
decre—
I have sent him back to Ithaca.
Never will I walk again beside the twi-
light sea
On the shore that looks toward Ithaca
Lest the wind should bring to him a
breath of days gone by,
Of the beauty and the sorrow of his
madness that was I. . . .
Peace to him and his, O Zeus! I ask
no more of thee—
Peace upon that home in Ithaca.

BEATRICE SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN

SERENE upon the heights above the world
I stand forever to his longing soul
A shining refuge from the cares of life,
I, who enskied his mind and freed his song
To weave its harmony with the singing stars
Where Beatrice is all of Heaven to him.
But when he flings his weary body down
There in our Florence, there's a hand that
soothes
His hot and furrowed forehead. Coarse with
toil
And reddened in his service is that hand—
Callous, but so tender in its touch!
I bless thee, Gemma's palm upon his brow—
Blessings drawn like blood-drops from my
heart,
That would be tears, were this not Paradise.
Dante, thou lovest me—I know, I know—

BEATRICE SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN

(continued)

A love supreme, higher than mortal loves,
A love that lifts its head among the angels,
A love that crowns me with a crown of stars
And everlasting laurel, that shall make
My name immortal, and shall fix us twain
Spirit to spirit, face to face forever
In the world's memory—such is Dante's
love. . . .

Yet, oh, my lover, I was woman once,
And neither Paradise nor that love of thine
Can make my ghost of womanhood forget
Those needle-roughened finger-tips of hers—
The little greedy mouth upon her breast.

UNPUNISHED?

HE walks at liberty the public streets.
The law has weighed his deed and let him
go,
And yet—is he quite scathless when he
meets
The men and women whom he used to
know?
Is there no sting in the averted gaze
Of those among whom he has broken bread,
Or in the furtive glances that appraise
The dull dishonored silver of his head?
Cheered by such comradeship as he can buy
He goes his way that daily grows more dim,
Trusted by none, with none that he can
trust.
I wonder if he never with a sigh
Confronts the years that gape ahead of him
And wishes that the verdict had been just.

GOD'S CHALLENGE

THE story we have written on the past
Is neither to forget nor to undo.
Our memories must walk until the last
A barrier and a bond between us two;
But wrong beyond the wrong that we have
done
Would be to sap the strength of coming
years
With shame that makes a darkness of the
sun—
To fade the web of life with futile tears.

WE sinned against the world—then ours to
give
The world a service greater than our sin,
An understanding love for all who live
That could not be, except for what has
been.

GOD'S CHALLENGE (continued)

Thank God for His high challenge! It shall
bring

Grapes from our thorns, and from our bitter
well

Sweet waters for the strength and comforting

Of those who walk in safety where we fell.

TWO SONGS

I

DEAR, we have kissed and laughed between
the kisses;
Our lips have met upon the salt of tears.
We have remembered—while our paths
were parted,
Love held a hand of each along the years.
But sweeter even than the kiss you gave me,
More child than lover, scarce aroused from
sleep,
Was that your eyes implored and mine re-
fused you
That something better might be ours to
keep.

2

I WILL give you jewels of the sunrise
And webs of twilight for your soul to wear,
Words of wonder for the spring's wild beauty,
The will to venture and the strength to bear,
I will light white fire upon your altar.
You to me only one gift shall make—
An alabaster box of precious fragrance
That your own hands must break.

WINDFLOWERS

WINDFLOWERS have blossomed in the
bare brown woods.

Rosy-white, frail, they are quivering to
the air

That is pure and cold like a young girl's
dreams.

Summer will come, and serpents in the
brush;

Autumn's clinging mists and the sadness
of dead leaves;

Winter's hard beauty and desolate white
peace;

Over and over, year after year. . . .

And always, thank God, each year will
bring a day

When windflowers blossom in the bare
brown woods.

BARBE VERRUE

BARBE VERRUE, troubadouresse
Of the pleasant land of France,
Far and wide I roamed to bless
Hill and valley with romance.
Many a lord of high estate
Would have won me for his mate,
Many a squire of low degree
Would have shared his crust with me,
For the singer's piercing art
Cleaves the doublet, finds the heart—
If their blood ran red or blue,
Men were men, to Barbe Verrue.
But I turned from every plea
Choosing rather to be free.
Oh, the merry life I had
In my journeys up and down,
Town to tower and tower to town,
Making honest people glad!

BARBE VERRUE (continued)

Daughter of the science gay,
I am paid for service true
By the simple souls who pray
For the peace of Barbe Verrue.

ROMANCE

THE sweet spring woods—a clouded moon
—and youth. . . .

And the eternal truth

Of all the sweet sad throbbing songs of old,
Of all the tales the troubadours have told.

This boy with proud bent head, this grave
shy girl

Whose rapt face takes the moonlight like a
pearl,

Are not themselves alone.

How many feet in theirs this path has
known!

This is the garden of old Capulet,

The tryst of Aucassin and Nicolette,—

Those wide mysterious eyes

Drew Dante's wandering soul to Paradise,

Mirrored the hungry flames of ruined Troy

And made the years of servitude a joy

ROMANCE (continued)

To Rachel's shepherd. By the tawny Nile
Antony sold the world for that swift smile.
On that strong breast Francesca fearless
died.

So shone the Swan-Knight to his rescued
bride.

They pass into the dusk . . . so met and
clung

Those lips in Eden, when the world was
young.

UNDER THE FIG TREE

“Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under
the fig tree, I saw thee.”
Nathanael answered, “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God.”

HOW still it is! In such an hour as this
Of twilight silence, one might hear the
steps
Of Destiny draw near across the world—
Only it is not so great moments come.
We do not hear their tread; we sit at meat,
Perhaps, among our friends—perhaps at
work
Among the little pleasant common things
That make what we call life—when all at
once
We lift our eyes and in the open door
We see Fate standing. And we do not rise,
It may be, from the table—nor let fall
The tool that we are using—but we know
That we shall never be the same again.

UNDER THE FIG TREE (continued)

Why should those words be terrible?

To change—

Is it because upon all change there lies
The shadow of the great, the final change?
Each outgrown living is a little death.
I think that is the reason why I love
Well-trodden paths, familiar friendly scenes,
Trees that, like this, I know from early
green

To winter bareness. I would bar my door
Forever, if I might, against all change. . . .
So men grow cowards. Will there come a
day

My love of custom will be fear of change,
My love of life shrivel to fear of death?
Unless a thing can grow, it must decay.
Shall I be stiff of fiber, dim of sight,
Impatient of all vision that exceeds
My own, hard even in my kindness?
I have known such men and judged them
not too gently;

But somehow it is clear to me to-night,
Perhaps they only loved the known too well.

UNDER THE FIG TREE (continued)

If there could rise a prophet to proclaim
All life is one, here and beyond the
grave—

There is no change, only increase of
light

Upon the things we know! If that
might be—

Would I have ears to hearken and a heart
To understand? And would I dare to face
Living and dying and what lies beyond
As a supreme adventure, caring nothing
What might befall me, if I could but see
That growing light? Or would I turn
away. . . .

Is it too late? O God, be merciful
To me, who may, although I have not sinned
Grossly, as men call sin, be lost at last
More than the broken sweepings of the
street,

Good that is turned to ill, and knows it not!
Strike me with thy flaming sword of love
That cuts like wrath! Rend suddenly apart
The veils of habit and long prejudice

ON LATMOS

I CALLED him to the mountain, and he came.
The valley drew him—ah, could I not see
How slowly and reluctantly at first
His feet were turned from the familiar ways?
Until I stooped to him and put aside
The dimness of his sight that hid my face;
Then he came gladly, but with arms out-
stretched,
Hasting with quickened breath and burning
eyes
As man to woman. So I led him on
A pace ahead, always a pace ahead
And out of reach—and so he followed me.
Now he is mine. His body lies asleep
Lax as a child's, unmoving—but his soul. . . .
His soul stands up as one who puts aside
His garments at the games to run his course.
So do I love thee best, Endymion!

ON LATMOS (continued)

Clad in this cast-off garb, however fair,
Thy kisses would have made of Artemis
Only a woman. Now thou art a god,
Bringer of beauty to the weary world,
Making its darkness bright—even as I
Among the stars, on earth Endymion.
Ours is the commerce of immortal love—
Hearts lifted and assuaged, the hand of wrong
Palsied in act to strike, healing of pain
And quickening of poverty to hope,
Mercy in minds that knew it not, and joy
In the dulled eyes of weepers—by these things
Thou, godlike, dost attest thy love for me,
A goddess, and thou feelest in thy strength
My tenderness, and knowest me thine own.
Yet thou wert born a man and not a god.
Strange—had I left thee in the valley there
Thou wouldst have stayed a shepherd, rising
 slow
With yawns and stretchings of unwilling limbs
And eyes too heavy to behold the dawn,
Until the fervid touch of eager noon
Kindled thy blood to human passion. Nay,

ON LATMOS (continued)

How had I borne to see thee dancing then
Among the herd-girls, thrilled with sudden
sight

Of swaying arms and soft young bosoms,
dazed

By some warm gust of unexpected curls
That blinds thee with soft fragrance, squan-
dering

Thy strength and youth and beauty in the
arms

Of what is of the earth, and shall endure
No longer than the earth; to see thee grow
Heavy of foot and gnarled of hand, a churl
Deep drinking with the rest at harvest home,
Taking to bed and board a docile mate
To give thee food and children at the will
Of thy gross, thoughtless body, and at last
To see thee die, tired out, yet clinging still
To that uncomely garment stained with use
And shapeless grown with age and careless
wear,—

That garment men would call Endymion!
Across the starry spaces comes to me

ON LATMOS (continued)

My liberated lover's cry of joy:

"This is the better way, my love!"—and yet
That red mouth moves as to a woman's kiss.
The languid arm grows tense, as if it clasped
To the strong breast quick-shaken with a sigh
The herd-girl's yielding laughter, and the hand
Curves as about a little hand that steals
Home to its palm—a clinging childish
hand. . . .

Sleep, body, sleep! Art thou Endymion?

Endymion is a god and far away.

Poor shell of clay, what right hast thou to
dream

Dreams of the valley when thy soul is gone?

Hast thou indeed a life that is thine own?

Nay, hast thou rights as well? I pity thee—

For my Endymion shall not taste of death.

The measureless eternities are his

Wherein to spend his ever-crescent power.

His beauty grows forever with the still

Immortal growth of the unhastening gods

Who smile to see the worlds drop into dust

Knowing what is to come. But what of thee,

ON LATMOS (continued)

Endymion the mortal? Thou must grow
Less beautiful, not more, as year by year
Binds leaden sandals on thy dragging feet.
The vision that beholds what men call Time
A little dancing mote which quivers down
Among a thousand others through a beam
Of light supernal, to be lost in dark—
That vision is the god's, and without end
His time for loving, as his power for love
Without a limit. Ah, but what of thee,
Endymion the mortal? Thou canst love
Only a little, and a little while,
And in one little, unexpanding way.
Earth bounds thee, as it holds thee at the last,
And if thou go unfruitful to the dust,
That is thine end. There trembles on my lips
The smile that is the weeping of the gods
To think how eagerly thy arms went out
To clasp me, Artemis, a pace ahead,
Always a pace ahead and out of reach.
Poor fool, can mortal arms take Artemis?
Haply didst even think to have of me
The comfort of the hearth, and hear my voice

ON LATMOS (continued)

From lips like thine call "Father" at thy
knees—

And I have given thee nothing but long sleep
Disquieted with dreams.

The world is still—

The heavens wheel about me where I stand
Poised between earth and sky. From far away
It seems that I can hear the sleepless hearts
Of all the cheated dreamers of the world.
The hearts who found the perfect love too late
To clasp and hold it close—those sadder
hearts

Who thought to realize transcendently
Body and soul, to prison Artemis
A bride—and fared as thou, Endymion
The mortal. Bitter waste of dreams and tears!
Their eyes are calm with seeing overmuch,
Those stars—but I, since I am of the gods,
I grieve in vision for the pains of men.
Such waste of dreams and tears—and yet—
and yet

Is it all waste? Blessed indeed is he

ON LATMOS (continued)

Who deems that he has seen God face to
face.

Whether the dream be very truth or not,
Blessed is he if it be truth for him.

The heart that found the perfect love too
late—

Perchance had love been free to clasp and hold
It had proved less than perfect. Now that
heart

Goes glorious, having seen divinity
Unveiled, a hallowed creature through the
years.

And thou, my sleeper—for I call thee mine
Although thy dreams have never known my
face,

What shall I do? Shall I awake thee now,
Or shall I hold thee here with poppies bound
Shut from thine earth, thine only heritage,
Leaving my lover free to range the stars?

Standest thou here, Endymion the god,
With sad sweet eyes upon me? Thou hast
read

ON LATMOS (continued)

My thought while still I locked it in my heart
Reluctant to release it. O my love,
Zeus is our father—where he giveth life
Shall we give death? Take unto thee again
Thy cast-off garment—stooping from the god
Endue thee with thy body. Go once more
Unto the valley, to the flocks and herds,
The rustic festival, the hearth at night.
Walk clothed among mankind, Endymion,
Thou who hast run with Artemis free-limbed
Upon the heights of heaven. Live out thy
life—

The things of earth cannot ignobly come
Ever again, my lover, unto thee.
And for the sake of her, the child of Zeus
Who gave thee godhood, thou shalt tenderly
Cherish and reverence her whom thou dost
choose

To be thy wife, and thou shalt carry forth
Thy children to behold me in the sky,
And teach them little songs of Artemis.
Thine earthly vesture shall conform itself
To thy true body's beauty, till at last

ON LATMOS (continued)

It fall from thee, thou hardly knowest how
Nor carest, and thou face me once again
Upon these heights, my lover and my god—
The truer god because the truer man.

I bid thee no farewell, Endymion.

GIFTS

MANY have given me songs,
Others have given me power,
Joy like a cleaving sword,
Pain like a rain-sweet flower,
Vision of worlds unfound,
Dreams that burn in the breast.
With a smile in your quiet eyes
You give me—rest.

FRIENDS have clasped my hand,
Lovers my lips have kissed,
Priests have lifted my soul
As the incense rises in mist,
Prophets have called me like trumpets
Where the work of the world is done.
You open the door of my heart
To God's dear sun.

THE PIXY

“And out of darkness came the Hands
That reach through nature, moulding men.”

It is believed in Cornwall, especially in the wilder and more remote districts, that the pixies sometimes put their offspring secretly in the place of human children, that such changelings may learn the secrets of humanity and bring back the knowledge to their people. It is quite possible that a pixy changeling might live unchallenged in a mortal community till recalled by the pixy people. Midsummer Night, it hardly need be repeated, is the one time of the year when the two worlds merge. The action of this story, therefore, takes place always at that time.

PEOPLE OF THE STORY

UNCLE SAUNDRY, an old man

WILL TREGINE, a young farmer

HUGH PENWARDEN, a young fisherman

MARGARET

THE PIXY, known humanly as LYLIARD

YOUNG HUEY

PART I

THE PIXY

We see a wooded cliff on the Cornish Coast. At the right stands a newly built cottage which evidently has never yet been occupied. There is a bridal suggestion in the clumsy tenderness with which flowers have been planted about the door. There is a narrow gap between the cottage and the thicket, where the blue of the deep sea is visible. Will Tregine is filling in the ground about the roots of a sapling that he has just planted before the cottage. Uncle Saundry stands directing the operation; both men are leaning against a strong wind from the sea.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

So—stay her well and pack her sound.
She'll stand if once she grips the ground.

WILL

A stormy day you chose for her!

UNCLE SAUNDRY

The little people are all astir
In the rustle of leaves and the splash of the
spray.
How else could it be upon Midsummer Day?
She will be

A lucky tree,
For I dug her from Saint Leven's green.

WILL (laughing)

You pointed and I dug, you mean.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

She'll prosper those that here shall bide,
Hugh and Margaret, groom and bride,
And many little ones beside.
There'll be no pixy-pranks to fear,
No changeling in the cradle here!
This tree will guard the house like Vicar's blessing.

WILL

Why should the need for such a shield be pressing?
Is it for malice, nothing more,
That pixies vex poor mortals so?
There's little of the fairy-lore
You do not know.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye, you do well to learn of me,
Not join the fools who nowadays
Flout all they are too blind to see.

I know the hidden people's ways.
Hugh says there are no pixies—pooh!
Nor spriggans neither. Clever Hugh—
He might be wiser and sadder too
But for this guarding tree.
Malice? They have no more of spite
Than winds and waters, day and night—
Or so my grandsir told it me.
But curious, as all wild things are,
They wonder at the ways of men
Who live and die and live again
As we may wonder at a star.
For they are kin to all the elements—
Earth, water, air and fire they know full well—
But of one word they never learned the sense.
What is a soul, not one of them could tell.
This is the secret, which to know
Into the world they go
As changelings, there to live and grow
Like women and like men
Till their own people call them back again.

WILL

And have they not yet learned it?
Such patience should have earned it!

Here's Hugh! We got your gift in place
Just in good time.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That is no bridal face—

(Hugh enters from the wood, troubled and brooding,
so absorbed in his own gloomy thoughts that he does not
see them.)

He's pixy-led. This is no lucky day
To walk the woodland all alone, that way.

(He sings.)

Midsummer Day, Midsummer Day,
That is the time when the pixies are gay.
Midsummer Night, Midsummer Night,
That is the season of fairy delight—

HUGH (interrupting harshly)

So Lyliard learned that song from you!
You might have better business
Than giddyng her featherbrain
With fairy tales and fancies vain—

WILL

Come, come! You show us something less
Than gratitude. See, Hugh,
Here's Uncle's wedding-gift.

HUGH

A tree—

Why, that's a kindly thought; and it will grow
As love should grow—and shall, God prosper
me.

Forgive me for my hasty speech and rude.
This last day's waiting shakes my fortitude.
I'm not myself.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That's natural, I know.

HUGH

I thank you—aye, and so shall Margaret too,
And many a summer may it shelter you
Smoking your pipe beside our cottage door.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye, for I'm human. Pixy-folk and such
Will be afraid
To let its slender shade
Fall on them—and its leaves they dare not touch.
A holy tree—it rooted in the sod
Of the green path the good Saint Leven trod.
I have known my years threescore
And ten—I do not ask for more;

Yet I would plant its mate before I go
For you and Lyliard, Will. Be not afraid
For all they call her changeling, pixy-maid.
Lasses were made for wooing, lad—make haste,
For neither youth nor age has time to waste.
When cherries ripen is the hour to taste.
I warrant you she will not answer no.

HUGH

Poor Will—why give him such a stormy part?
He loves a quiet life.
Better to take the northeast gale to heart
Than Lyliard for a wife.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

I know the talk—she's wild and cold, they say,
As yonder spindrift gray.
Never heed them, Will—she is not so.
Young eyes often see less clear than old.

WILL (waves a hearty farewell as the old man goes
away).

Wise Uncle! She is neither wild nor cold,
But pure and strong as the shoreward air
Salt from leagues of open sea.

HUGH

Did I not say the northeast gale
That snaps the mast and splits the sail?
Poor Uncle Saundry's wits are doited fair
To bid you mated with the tempest be.

WILL

Pure and strong, and the heart behind
Those clear eyes would be wondrous kind
Could one but win her to his mind.

HUGH

She seems not so to me.
Rather like fleeting fires of storm
That flicker through the thunder-hill—
The lightning-flame that cannot warm
But only . . . kill.
Well, we have always quarreled, she and I.
I never liked her—who knows why?
And for herself, she bears me scant goodwill.
Like flint and steel we two have always clashed
And from our smitten tempers, anger flashed.
I never saw her but in stormy mood;
To Margaret she seems another being,
But Margaret's eyes were only made for seeing
Things that are beautiful and sweet and good.

Our childhood as it slipped away
Disclosed our later love begun—
Calm as the dawning of the day,
Sure as the rising of the sun.
Our feet were made in tune to tread
The long, long road of flowers and dust.
Ere we were born, we two were wed—
Mine was her love and hers my trust.
Dear hearth to-morrow sets aglow
Our dwelling's constant heart to be,
Our love shall comfort even so
My home in her and hers in me.
Need calls me out upon the deep
Where gulls wheel wild and billows comb.
Whatever perils round me sweep,
This holy light shall draw me home.
Yes, from the very arms of death,
From any storm by sea or land,
My breath would answer Margaret's breath,
My hand would grope for Margaret's hand.

WILL

It must make all the difference to know
Some one is waiting you at home, her gaze
Upon the road, thinking your pace too slow

After a day apart. Why, I could fare
So gladly home, were such a welcome there—
While now I plod my dull accustomed ways
And lift my lonely latch with none to care
Because there's nowhere else for me to go.
Were Lyliard waiting me at close of day—

HUGH

The Pixy by a hearth, a cradle? Nay!

WILL

Why not?

HUGH

The pixy-folk, old women say,
Lure wayfarers to flounder lost in mire
By taking on the semblance of a fire
Shining through cottage windows in the night.
The poor fool hastens toward the cheering light
And plumps into a bog, where he may wallow
Cursing his luck till morning. Do you follow
My parable?

WILL (laughing good-humoredly)

Oh, yes—I understand!

For you there is no woman in the land
But Margaret. All the rest to earth you beat

That she may have a carpet for her feet.
You pay her not her due unless you dare
Admit that other maidens too are fair.

HUGH

What do you mean by dare not?

WILL

Poor lad! You will be quieter to-morrow.

HUGH

Mock as you will, I care not.

WILL

Indeed I mock not when I bid you borrow

(sings)

A sturdy coat of badger-skin
To wrap your ticklish temper in.
Every man's touchy, so they say,
Just before his wedding-day.
His freedom he must kiss good-by
And turn her from the door.
He dare not even roll his eye
In ways he walked before—

Come, come! You will not frown at an old friend
For a silly song? I'm envious, that's all,
Wishing that I might hear the welcoming call

Of wife and little ones at labor's end.
Now if the good Lord prosper me,
Uncle shall plant another tree
When this year's earning safe in store is laid—
But you must set your sinew to that spade!
This thought was Uncle's, fair and fine,
But all the sweat was mine.
Do you as well for me when comes my day!

HUGH (as the village clock strikes twelve in the distance)

Hark—that is noon.

Margaret will be here soon.

WILL

Margaret's to meet you here? Then I'm away.
Do you as well for me when comes my day!

(When he is gone, Hugh stands for a moment looking out to sea, then, squaring his shoulders resolutely as if to throw off an incubus, he goes to the cottage. One of the plants beside the door is drooping for lack of a stake. He takes out his knife, cuts a twig from one of the bushes of the thicket, and begins trimming and pointing it. As he does so, he begins to whistle "Midsummer Day," but stops annoyed as he realizes it.)

HUGH

I'm pixy-led—I mean, my mind's astray.
Plague on the tune, it flickered through my
thought
Like summer lightning—

(he breaks the stick, throws it down and angrily pockets his knife)

I am good for naught.

Every man's touchy, so they say,

Just before his wedding-day.

His freedom he must kiss good-by. . . .

Plague on Will Tregine, and on the dry

Musty intolerable jape

From which some idiot must always scrape

The same old music when a man is wed!

Freedom—would I be free from Margaret?

Such freedom would be hell. If she were dead

I would be hers—I never could forget.

Only to think of her brings back my calm.

Her name upon my lips is holy balm—

Margaret—Margaret—Margaret—

Here she will train about the door

Sweet hardy roses, and her hand

Will coax up flowers where before

Was only barren sand.

Her pathway shall with box be set

To make the dewy twilight sweet,

And gilliflowers and mignonette

Shall cluster at her feet

With heartsease for her bosom white
To match the heartsease in her eyes—

(Suddenly, in the wood, there is heard a song. The voice of the singer has an unhuman quality in its beauty, like the voice of a bird or of a young boy.)

Give me the red of the day
For a kirtle gay!
Give me the lightning to wear
For a snood in my hair!
Ribbons and laces are maiden's array,
But I must have fire to be fair.

(Hugh has stood rigid, listening. As the slight figure of the Pixy, in a scarlet gown, appears from the wood, he turns and is about to go, but she runs across and intercepts him.)

HUGH

Lyliard—

THE PIXY

Why do you run away?
I will not eat you.

HUGH

How did you happen to come this way?

THE PIXY

Thinking to meet you.

HUGH

What can you have to say to me?

THE PIXY

Only well-wishing.
To-morrow drops net in a deep new sea—
Good luck to your fishing!

HUGH

On no new ocean I embark to-morrow;
I sail a coast well charted.
Together we have proven joy and sorrow.
I know her golden-hearted.
Life is a simple thing if we but live it
In faithfulness and duty,
And should I wrong her, may not God forgive it
Unto my soul—

THE PIXY (interrupting with strange quiet intensity)
We walked along the shore, one day,
And you and Margaret walked behind.
“I love you, dear,” I heard you say,
“With all my heart, with all my mind,
“With all my soul. . . .”

HUGH

You were with Will Tregine, yet you could hear
What I was saying? Is my voice so clear?

THE PIXY

You spoke a word that meant more to my ear
Than any that he uttered. Is the whole

Of what you call a soul
In love of man and woman?

HUGH

Things like that
I leave alone. Souls are the vicar's trade.

THE PIXY

He? He knows as little as his cat—
Less, maybe. Why, he's weakly and afraid
And old as Uncle Saundry. Neither one
Could stare with open eyes against the sun.
Surely a soul is beautiful and strong.

HUGH

Ask Will Tregine. He would not tell you wrong.

THE PIXY

He . . . frightens me. It is to you I turn.
Why do you look away?

HUGH

Your eyes—they burn. . . .

THE PIXY (with an impish return to her song)

Give me the lightning to wear
For a snood in my hair!
Ribbons and laces are maiden's array,

But I must have fire—
Why have you called me all the morning
through?

HUGH

I have not called you.

THE PIXY

Ask your friend the vicar
If it be not a sin to speak untrue.
Look how the lightnings flicker
In that great cloud-bank—but no rain to-mor-
row!

HUGH

I had not even thought of you.

THE PIXY

Oh, sorrow,
I'm growing deaf. 'Twas not your voice at all?
But I called you. Did you not hear me call?

HUGH

No.

THE PIXY

Not a whisper?

HUGH

No, I say.

THE PIXY

Did you not feel a stinging drive of spray
Salt on your cheek? The wind's wild fingers
strong

Twisted among your hair? Did you not long
To cleave the water like a straight white dart
And swim forever? Had you not at heart
A sudden sickness for the open sky?
Lay not the roof upon you like a shroud?
Did you not long to ride a flying cloud
And pluck the stars like blossoms? That was
I . . .

HUGH (shaken, with an effort at mockery)

Pixy!

THE PIXY

Aye, turn your coat with speed
Before a spell be cast on you.
Who was it said he did not heed
These stories of the pixy-breed?
Not one of them is true, said he—
Wise man was he! Who could it be?
Not one of them is true!

HUGH

If Will Tregine could see you now
He too would vow

HEARTS AWAKE

You are more kin to wild things of the wood
Than to the womankind men woo and wed.

THE PIXY

What do you mean?

HUGH

He said

You are so gentle and so good!

THE PIXY

Something in him I never understood. . . .

Something in me he cannot understand. . . .

HUGH (harshly, as if in spite of himself)

Tell me—do you love Will Tregine?

THE PIXY

You would be glad?

HUGH

I? Bah—it's no concern of mine

Except that he's an honest lad

Worthy a woman's best.

THE PIXY

You think

I'd give him—what? Your meaning?

HUGH

None.

THE PIXY

Look at me, Hugh—why do you blink
As if you looked against the sun?

(Breathing hard like a spent runner, he makes an involuntary movement toward her, but she whirls away lightly as a wind-blown leaf, singing as she dances.)

Midsummer Day, Midsummer Day,
That is the time when the pixies are gay.
Midsummer Night, Midsummer Night,
That is—

(a pirouette brings her face to face with Uncle Saundry's tree, her foot almost touching its shadow on the ground. She stops short)

Where did you get that tree? Since yesterday
It was put here.

HUGH

Why, any one would say
The nickname we have given you
Is not a jest, but true!
Thanks to Saint Leven, it's a holy tree—

THE PIXY

Then if I be
A pixy, I must walk around—
Like this—its shadow on the ground.

(She does so with a pretty burlesque of caution, then, with a triumphant ripple of laughter, dashes for the window of the cottage.)

Let me look in!

HUGH (stopping her)

Not before she comes—no.

THE PIXY

What harm is in my glance, to fear it so?

HUGH

The house is hers and hers the earliest sight.
That is her right.

THE PIXY

Have it your own way, then.

Curious things are men!

If Will Tregine had built a house for me,

Would he make Margaret wait till I could see?

HUGH

How much you speak of him! Ah, yes, some day
He'll win you.

THE PIXY

No—

HUGH

Why do you turn away?

Look you at me. . . .

God, but you're beautiful, you pixy-sprite!
How do you talk to Will Tregine?

THE PIXY

Ask him—that is fair.

HUGH

Do you gaze him drunk with your eyes' dark
wine?

THE PIXY

Ask him—if you care.

HUGH

Do you smile him mad with your scarlet lips,
Do you pluck at his heart with your finger-tips
And drown his soul in the dusk of your hair?

THE PIXY

Ask him—if you dare.

HUGH

That's once too often for a man to bear,
You lovely devil—does he kiss you so?

(Eagerly she yields to his arms and raises her lips to his; but after a moment she holds his face a little from her, studying it with a wistful perplexity that has no passion in it.)

THE PIXY

Here's nothing I need take such pains to know.
I knew long, long ago

That man to woman turns
As surely as water drenches, as fire burns
Or as the small resistless grasses grow.
I thought that love was greater far than this—
Or is it something I must always miss?
Would Margaret have found it in that kiss?

HUGH (abruptly releasing her)

Margaret! Oh, God!

THE PIXY

What ails you?

HUGH

Shame.

Bitter to my soiled lips is now her name—
How shall I meet her quiet smile
Clean as I was an hour ago?
What shall my sickened heart beguile
To forget its overthrow?
Eternal truth how can I swear
Whose lips are blackened by a lie?
Her constancy how can I bear
Knowing well how false am I?

THE PIXY

Then that was love, as you love her?

HUGH

No, no!

Madness, an evil dream! And yet . . . and
yet . . .

THE PIXY

There is—a thing beyond—that's closed to me.
Still to go seeking, when I thought at last
I had the secret! Well—if it must be. . . .
Hugh, do not grieve so. What is past is past—
You only need forget.

HUGH

Can you—forget?

THE PIXY

Why not? You plucked a fruit upon the wall
When you were hungry. What is there to blame?

HUGH

It was no more that led to Adam's fall
And barred the gate of Paradise with flame.
I was so strong—so happy—till you came!

THE PIXY

You will be so again when I'm away.

HUGH

You are going? Yes—O God, I pray, I pray
That I may never see your face again!

THE PIXY

I wish I knew Him.

HUGH

Who?

THE PIXY

The One whose name
Men use so much. You speak it not the way
The vicar does—not coldly—yet it seems
Hardly as if you named one real to you,
A friend. I feel that He could make my dreams
Come true
If I could ever find Him.

HUGH

Lyliard,
Where will you go?
No—no—I must not know—

THE PIXY

What I seek I'll find or miss
In other towns as well as this.
Farewell, Hugh.

(She leaves him without a backward glance.)

HUGH

Lyliard! Is it all a dream?
Could I but wake and find it so—

Life as it was an hour ago!
I never saw the wild sweet gleam
Of those dark eyes—she never came
Out of the shadow, young Desire
On flickering feet as light as flame—
Never my arms—she told me to forget,
Who gave me back my kiss when our lips met!
My heart is like a house gutted with fire.
Margaret—Margaret!
I dare not think of what before was bliss. . . .
She will train about the door
Sweet hardy roses, and her hand
Will coax up flowers from the sand,
But heartsease—nevermore.
Why, this is folly. What's a kiss?
Nothing to cause so much ado.
Men steal them under the mistletoe
For all to see, and laughing too.
And yet, I know
There was no laughter in my heart—for
this. . . .

(He has flung himself down on the step of the cottage, and hides his face in his arms. Margaret enters, and stooping over him lays her hand on his shoulder.)

MARGARET

Why, what's amiss, dear lad?

HUGH

Myself. I hate

Myself, unworthy of your purity,
Your tenderness. Before it is too late,
Beloved, dare you give yourself to me?

MARGARET (seating herself beside him, her soothing
hand still on his shoulder)

It is too late to take again
My gift that is not of to-day.
Children at play, I loved you then
As I shall love you when we're gray.
'Tis not to-morrow makes me yours;
Yours I have been these many years.

HUGH

Margaret, such a love endures
Though all our world stream down in tears.
And yet I am not fit to kiss
Your slender footprints in the dust.

MARGARET

Dear boy of mine, what folly's this?
Love requites love, trust answers trust.
No chaffering between us two,
No merchant's talk of more and less!
All that I am is one with you
In faith and joy and tenderness.

HUGH

Give me the clearness of your eyes
That I may see myself therein!

MARGARET

Ah, now my dear again is wise!

HUGH

The man you love can never sin
Against his image in your heart,
Never fall short of your belief.
Yours, Margaret, in joy and grief—
Yours, Margaret, till death shall part.

MARGARET

Now like your very self you seem.

HUGH

In your dear eyes myself I see.
Alone, I had an evil dream
From which your coming wakened me.
See, here the house that waits for you
To make it home.

(They rise together, his arm about her.)

MARGARET

You builded it.

HUGH

And it shall see our dreams come true.

MARGARET

To-morrow—

HUGH

When the fire is lit. . . .
And you shall train about the door
Sweet hardy roses, and your hand
Shall coax up flowers from the sand,
And heartsease—heartsease . . .

(involuntarily his eyes turn back to the wood, and his voice catches almost in a sob, as if he still saw the Pixy flame-like against the green. Then, with a deep breath and a resolute lift of his head, he goes on firmly)

And heartease for your bosom white
To match the heartsease in your eyes.

(He opens the cottage door and they go in together.)

PART II

A year later. We see the interior of the cottage. It is simple and sparsely furnished, but clearly the home of people who love it and each other. At the right is a door, leading to the bedroom. At the left, the hearth, beside which stands a cradle. At the back, between two latticed windows, through one of which we see Uncle Saundry's little tree, is the house-door. Just outside, in the warm sunset light, Uncle stands with Will, who is looking out to sea through a spy-glass.

WILL

Aye—yonder is his sail beyond a doubt.
There's the black M he set against the white
That Margaret might single out
His boat from all the rest in sight.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

That is glad news.

WILL (entering the house and hanging the spyglass in its place)

And yet how otherwise
It might have been. With what affrighted eyes
Might we have seen his homing sail to-day,

Had things gone ill with her, and he away.
I think he would have died upon her grave
If he had found her dead—and yet he went
Thinking her sickness safely past, content
And happy in his new-born son, and brave
To win the living silver of the wave
That they might prosper. Strange we never
hear
A warning whisper—DANGER DRAWETH
NEAR—
GO NOT FROM HOME! He scarce was out
of sight
When she was stricken.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye—that very night.
There's not a doubt that but for Lyliard's care
She would have died. How speeds your wooing
there?
Maids flee to see if men will chase—
You followed when she set the pace.
Your feet have worn the herbage down
Between Tregartha and our town,
Until you brought her back again.
Truth, lad—out with it then!

Came she in answer more to Margaret's needing
Or to your pleading?

WILL

Uncle, let the matter be.
Jesting time is past for me.
Every day I've seen her here
Has made her twenty times as dear.
Now I can no longer tarry—
It must be farewell or marry.
If she bids me, I will go—
But I can no longer bear
Uncertainty. Too much I care
Whether the word be yes or no.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Ask her boldly for her yes.
Maids are tricky creatures—
Love unsought they'll not confess
By voices or by features.
Put it to her blunt and strong—
Bid her take or lose you.
Mark me, she will not be long,
And—she will not refuse you.

WILL

Hush!

HEARTS AWAKE

(The Pixy comes from the inner room, the sleeping baby in her arms, and lays it in the cradle. She is dressed in a soft dark wine-color, no longer the flaming figure of her first appearance, and it is as if a similar shadow had come over her whole person. She comes forward to greet them, smiling.)

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Lyliard, Hugh is on the way.
And how's our Margaret to-day?

THE PIXY

Charming. All danger's left behind.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

You are a doctor to my mind.

THE PIXY

Herbs I have known since I was wee.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

When I fall sick, will you nurse me?

THE PIXY

I will indeed,
But may we long await the need!

UNCLE SAUNDRY

And little Huey—do we dare
To look at him?

THE PIXY

Take care!

He is asleep.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Ah—so you should be bending
Over your own.

THE PIXY

There are some lacks that lie too deep for
mending.
I walk alone.

UNCLE SAUNDRY

Aye—but not far. That is but girlish talking.
Ere long, I know
You'll choose a brave companion for your walk-
ing.

(He goes out, closing the door behind him. The Pixy, still stooping over the cradle, does not realize that he has gone alone, and that Will is left leaning against the wall by the door, his arms folded, his eyes fixed on her. She sighs, as she answers the last speech.)

THE PIXY

Whither to go?
Never to love, never to hate,
Never to die, never to live,
Only to watch and listen and wait
For a thing that none will give.
Never to hate, never to love,
Never to live, never to die—

WILL

Why are you sad?

THE PIXY

I did not know you still were here.

WILL

You should be joyous, dear,
If charity well done can make one glad.

THE PIXY

I am but less than sad and more than gay.
'Tis like the twilight of a stormy day
That clouds me now.

WILL

The twilight is the tenderest time of all,
Calling the farmer from the busy plow
Toward lighted windows, where the small
Bright heads are waiting, round the fire,
And with them his dear heart's desire,
Their mother—

THE PIXY

But I did not know
That what I did was charity.

WILL

Indeed
It was, for you left all and came to her.

THE PIXY

That is but nature's way, when there's a need
To answer it.

WILL

Life would be lovelier
Did every heart so simply take
The way of kindness. Would you show
Such mercy for another's sake
As you have shown for Margaret's?

THE PIXY

Oh—

How can I tell unless I know
The need that calls? It well may be
A need beyond my power to fill
Had I a thousand times the will.

WILL

Beloved, will you marry me?

(There is a silence while she stands looking into his eyes, her hands clasped on her breast. When she speaks at last, there is a different note in her voice from any we have heard before.)

THE PIXY

In my being then a silence broke,
As if one stronger than all nature spoke
A speech I hear but cannot understand.

Strange and sweet it sounds to me,
Like unknown music from the land
Heard by one adrift at sea.
Nothing in nature speaks like this.
Only man such thoughts can know
And the soul that makes him man.
If I should give you what I can,
Would you be happier so?
Say, will you have my mouth to kiss,
My hands to make your daily bread,
My breast to give your children ease?
If thus your longing may be fed,
Take me—but in wisdom wed
And never ask for more than these.

WILL

You could more easily have said
“I love you not,” and hurt me less.
No, no—I meant you no reproach.
It was my own wild clumsiness
That warn me as you might, would press
Its heavy-footed suit, encroach
Upon your patience. Now farewell—
I'll trouble you no longer.

HEARTS AWAKE

THE PIXY (impulsively detaining him as he turns away)

No—

You shall not leave me till I tell
The truth of why I bid you go.
What nature feels, that I can feel.
The laws of earth my life control—
But to my soul if you appeal,
What can I say, who have no soul?
I cannot love, I cannot hate,
I cannot die, I cannot live
As you know life. There is my fate,
A changeling with no heart to give,
That you would reckon worth the name—
Yet how am I myself to blame
That I am but a pixy?

WILL

Lyliard!

THE PIXY

Nay—

But hear me out. I bide with men
Who knows how long? Perhaps to-day
My people call me back again.

WILL

Child, child! And why not simply say
“I do not love you—go your way”?

You shall be rid of me at last—
I do not mean that peevishly,
Forgive me if it sounded so.
Tom Polgrain this whole year past
Has tried to buy my farm of me.
Now he shall have it. I will go
And see what fortune has to show
In other countries oversea.
And always shall my blessing be upon you.
Had I been man enough, I would have won you.
My fault, not yours, that you have said me no.
Do not be sorry for me—I have had
So much to make me glad.
Life has been different since my love began,
And though I asked for more than you could
give,
What you have given, I lose not while I live.
God bless you—keep you—love you . . . oh,
my dear. . . .

(He goes out quickly.)

THE PIXY

And I can only say—Farewell, good man.

(She presses her hand to her eyes, with a gesture of pain.)

That, I think, would be a tear

Were I a woman. Oh, the vain
Blind uncomprehending pain
Like the pang of quaking earth,
The rending agony of birth!
And he went in sorrow, fleeing
Truth too simple for his seeing. . . .
I fear—I fear!
This strange thing has come too near.
I have seen as through a screen
What a soul may mean,
And the knowledge moans in me
Like the fretting of the sea.
Why should my people strive to learn
Of that which they may never gain?
Peace we lose beyond return
And all our profit is but pain.

(She goes to the door and looks out, the sunset red
on her face.)

I will forget.
The sun will soon set
And with Midsummer dew will the grasses be
wet.
Midsummer Day, Midsummer Day,
That is the time when the pixies are gay.
Midsummer Night, Midsummer Night,

That is the season of fairy delight.
Naught could I give him that was worth his
taking,
Lacking the gift which is beyond my making.
Had I a heart, I think it would be breaking.
Midsummer Day is creeping away,
The moon's peeping out so white, so white,
And the stars by and by will come down from
the sky
To dance through the midsummer night.
The stars will come down from the sky
And the pixies come up from their caves—
And look at the fireflies, the mortals will cry,
And the glint of the moon on the waves!
Drop me a star to wear
In the dusk of my hair!
Drop me a star to rest
Like a rose on my breast,
For in ribbons and flowers a maiden is dressed
But I must have fire to be fair.

MARGARET (calls from the bedroom)

Pixy!

THE PIXY

Glad call, glad call!
I would come home

To the stars that fall
And the flying foam.
Here I am less
Than nothingness.
Let me come home!

MARGARET (appears in the doorway)

Pixy, who's there?

THE PIXY (helping her to the armchair by the cradle)

No one is here
But me, my dear.
I was but singing while I swept.
Oh, softly, softly! Have you grown so strong
All in a moment? 'Tis the first you've stepped
Out of your chamber.

MARGARET

Ready I must be
To welcome back my man from sea.
Will he not come to-day? He tarries long.

(She leans back in the chair with a smile)

I am weaker than I thought.

THE PIXY (with a nod toward the cradle)

That was not cheaply bought.

HEARTS AWAKE

MARGARET (looking into the cradle)

Who but a mother understands
The beauty of her babe asleep!
See, Lyliard—see his little hands
Like roseleaves in each other curled—
Hands that shall strongly plunge and deep
Into the treasures of the world.

THE PIXY

What would you have his manhood be?

MARGARET

Leave awhile to me
My little babe to keep!

THE PIXY

It was yourself that spoke of days to be.

MARGARET

Somehow, in your voice it seemed
I heard—eternity.

THE PIXY

You dreamed.

MARGARET

What would I not give to him!
Strength of soul and strength of limb,
Beauty of body and of mind,

A heart that is both brave and kind,
The happiness of loyal friends
And love, the joy that never ends.
If only I knew magic well,
I'd weave for him the pixy spell
Of the elements four—
Why do you shut the door?

(THE PIXY has moved swiftly across the room and closed the door. Now she returns and seats herself on the arm of Margaret's chair)

The sun has set—the pixy folk might hear.
What charm is that of which you tell?

MARGARET (leaning her head on the Pixy's arm)
Have you forgotten, dear?
It was yourself who told me, in the days
When first you came among us, and in jest
We called you Pixy, for your elfin ways.
How long ago that seems!

THE PIXY

How long! Lie back and rest
Here on my bosom.

MARGARET

Once, beside the fire,
Have you forgot? You said, His heart's desire

He cannot lack on whom this spell is wrought.
You would not tell by whom you had been
taught,
But I guessed Uncle Saundry. You recall?

THE PIXY

Yes, I remember all.

MARGARET

Earth to your eyes that you may see,
Fire to your heart that you may feel,
Water to your brow that you may know,
Air to your lips that you may speak.

THE PIXY (laying her hand softly on Margaret's
mouth)

Hush, hush! There danger lies. Let it alone.

MARGARET

Danger? A mind to which all things are
known,
Eyes that see everything, a heart which feels
And speech that never fails—the whole world
kneels
Before the feet of such!

THE PIXY

But if the final touch
Were lacking? If there came

Unforeseen, unplanned,
Something to break the spell,
And left the heart aflame,
The eyes wide open—then
The dazed bewildered mind
That cannot understand
All which it sees revealed—
The lips forever sealed—
Ah, better cold and blind!
That would be what men
Call hell.

MARGARET

Lyliard, Lyliard, you frighten me!

THE PIXY

Only a pixy such a power can wield,
And if the spell should interrupted be
Only one thing the broken charm can mend.
A pixy to the elements must yield
Her being wholly—with the magic, end.
End.

And though their life may be of little worth,
The pixy people cling to life and earth,
Fearing the darkness there, beyond it all.

MARGARET

Now you recall
More than you told me then.

THE PIXY

It came to me again.

(She makes a jest of it all, springing up from her seat)
Try if you will the spell—but not with him!
Look—have I kept your kitchen in good trim?

MARGARET

So brave a housewife! All is clear
As a new moon, and while I was lying
Flighty with fever, I could hear
My pans and skillets calling and crying,
Margaret, Margaret, come to us!
Naughty ones, why did you vex me thus?
You did not need me—
And now that I have come you scarcely heed me,
But to the Pixy turn your faces bright!
Tell me, dear, when shall I see
Your face by your own hearth-fire's light?

THE PIXY

Can you tell me?

(She goes quickly into the bedroom, closing the door
behind her.)

HEARTS AWAKE

MARGARET (smiling with wise tenderness)

The longing for a woman's part
Of life is crying in her heart.
For every woman love is best—
The wildest bird comes to the nest.

(The outer door is flung open and Hugh enters. When he sees Margaret he runs to her, and falling on his knees beside her clasps her in his arms. They are silent for a moment.)

HUGH

Margaret!

MARGARET

My boy, come back at last!
Why, hush—my love, the danger's past.
Daily I mend; there's naught to fear.
Give Lyliard thanks for that.

HUGH

The Pixy—here?

MARGARET

She's there within.

HUGH

Thank her I will.
They told me of her kindly care,
But not that she was with you still.
Later she shall claim her share
Of gratitude,—but now—all else must wait

And let me look at you awhile.
Give me the comfort of your smile,
Your touch—ah, God! How desolate
Without you all my life would be!
Margaret, Margaret, stay with me!

(Again they are silent in a close embrace. There is a knock at the door. Hugh rises and opens it, and Will enters.)

HUGH

Welcome, Will.

WILL

Welcome to you,
And welcome to your Margaret, too.
'Tis good to see her sitting here
In her own place
With such a happy face.

HUGH

To think that danger came so near
To her, and nothing called me back—
No warning from the cloud's gray rack,
No whisper from the sea.
How shall I ever dare again to go
Since you may have such bitter need of me
And I not know?

MARGARET

By friendship was my need well met,
Care that I never can forget,
And tenderness beyond my speech.
As God is never out of reach,
His angels always are at hand
In human shape, when comes His call.
Will, could I make you understand
All that we three must owe you—all—
You who brought Lyliard to me!

HUGH (low, involuntarily)

So it was he. . . .

WILL

Tax not your slender gain of strength
To thank me—say it all at length
To her, and give me for my meed
Your good wishes on my road.

HUGH

What do you mean? You leave us?

WILL

That riddle was not hard to read.

MARGARET

But why should you so grieve us?

WILL

Say that I have a roving will.
That may be true, and where's the harm?
I've made my bargain not so ill.
Tom Polgrain has bought my farm,
And now I'm free to roam my fill
So my fortune I will try
Wherever fortune seems to beckon.
Save that I bid my friends good-by,
Myself right lucky I may reckon.
To-morrow morning I'm away.

HUGH (as if against his will)
Alone?

WILL

Alone.

MARGARET

But why this haste?

WILL

I've thought of it for many a day—
Now that I am resolved, why waste
More time?

MARGARET

You go in happiness?

WILL

How else?

MARGARET

And—hope?

WILL

The worth of that is less.

A man as he travels may buy
Gladness with good he can do.
Fear is a mote in the eye,
Hope is a stone in the shoe,
Galling the trudge of the day,
Making him wish to be winging.
Once he has cast it away,
On he goes singing.
And so, farewell.

MARGARET (taking the hand he holds out to her)

Farewell—oh Will, dear friend,
Well may you fare!
Come back to Cornwall at your wandering's end.
Lyliard is there—
Shall I not call her?

WILL

I have said
All that I need to say to her—before.

HUGH

Will, remember that this door
Stands evermore ajar for you.

WILL (as he passes out, looks back with a gallant smiling wave of the hand)

I will remember, Hugh.

MARGARET

Go with him—speed him on his way, poor lad.
Brave as his words might be, his eyes were sad.
Lyliard will help me get to bed.

(When Hugh has followed Will, she calls)

Pixy—

(The Pixy comes from the bedroom. Margaret takes her hands and looks up at her wistfully)

Dear Pixy—did this have to be?

THE PIXY

If I could love a man, it should be he.
I am Grief's daughter. Where I touch, I wound.

MARGARET

Not me, dear heart, not me.
You touched me but to heal.

HOW SHALL WE KNOW YOU? (continued)

And every troubled life that walks apart,
Darkened as by mysterious poison-smoke,
We dare not judge lest we misjudge a heart
Which bore the sacrificial fire—and broke.

So high the cost that we should understand
True brotherhood—has it at last sufficed?
Show us, Lord Love, thy wound in every
hand—
In every heart the shadow of the Christ!

NOT BY BREAD ALONE

HE laughed aloud to see the table spread.
For all his khaki and his three gold bars,
Yes, and the scars
On his thin face, he still was such a boy,
So frankly simple in the greedy joy
With which he ate his supper, that I smiled
For happy thankfulness that all war's harms
And horrors had no power to blight in him
The everlasting Child.
"Home cooking will taste good to you," I
said.
He paused with lifted fork, distended cheek,
And wistful eyes that made my own grow
dim.
"If I could just get Mother in my arms
I wouldn't ask to eat, not for a week!"

RESTORATION

THEY look upon us through the mystic door,
Those who have passed, those who shall
 come to birth,
Waiting for us, the living, to restore
Beauty and fruitfulness to ravaged earth.
Where there were trees there must be trees
 again,
Sweet servants of the soil's imperious needs,
Because the Spring must not return in vain
Nor Autumn's bounty waste itself in weeds.
Where there was hope there must again be
 hope,
Undaunted beauty shining through the
 scars,
Because however men may fall and grope
They must not lose the everlasting stars.
It were the work of angels to revive
The orchard's fragrant ecstasy of flowers,

RESTORATION (continued)

To bid the murdered forest wake alive—
The work of angels—and God makes it ours.
A still diviner labor to reflower
The spirit's orchards after hate's red blight,
And He, the Lord of Life, who understands
All things, has laid it in our faltering hands.
O Will of God, upon our hands be power!
O Love of God, within our hearts be light!

MR. VALIANT PASSES OVER

(January 6, 1919)

WHEN the Post came and told him that at
last

The pitcher that so faithfully and long
Had served his fellow-creatures in their
thirst

Was broken at the fountain, Valiant said:
"I am going to my Father's; and although
Not easily I came to where I am,
My pains upon the journey were well
spent.

My sword I give to him who shall succeed
My pilgrim steps upon the Royal Road;
My courage and my skill I leave to him
Who can attain them—but my marks and
scars

I carry with me for my King to see
As witness of His battles that I fought."

MR. VALIANT PASSES OVER (continued)

As he went down into the river, many
Stood on the bank and heard him say: "O
death,
Where is thy sting?" And as the water
grew
Deeper—"O grave, where is thy victory?"
So he passed over, and the trumpets all
Sounded for him upon the other side.

John Bunyan, did you laugh in para-
dise
For joy to-day, to see your dream
come true?

JOYCE KILMER

SURELY the saints you loved visibly came
To welcome you, that day in Picardy—
Stephen whose dying eyes beheld his Lord,
Michael, a living blade of crystal flame,
And all the flower of heavenly chivalry
Smiling upon you, calling you by name.
Leaving your body like a broken sword
You went with them—and now, beyond our
sight,
Still in the ranks of God you sing and fight,
For death to you was one more victory.

SINGERS IN THE SERVICE

WE who are called arise
To an imperious unaccustomed toil
And lay aside the garments that we wore
Trailing the quiet years that went before—
The old serenities
And the familiar beauty. To the soil
We go, to elemental force and stress,
To own and to defy our weariness;
And we breathe beauty where we never
thought
Beauty could be, and brotherhood un-
sought
Is warm in us, who wished for it amiss
And coldly at our ease—how long ago!
We live, who sang of life we did not know.
And more than all our loss and gain, we
see
Another age, the happy heir of this—

SINGERS IN THE SERVICE (continued)

Children of the future, clean and free,
Wearing with new majesty the dear
Familiar beauty that we laid aside;
In their illumined eyes
Fixed holy stars, the old serenities;
Before their joyous feet a way made clear
By the great strife where we saw God—
and died.

NIGHT MAGIC

(A Lie-Awake Song)

THE apples falling from the tree
 Make such a heavy bump at night
I always am surprised to see
 They are so little, when it's light;

AND all the dark just sings and sings
 So loud, I cannot see at all
How frogs and crickets and such things
 That make the noise, can be so small.

THEN my own room looks larger, too—
 Corners so dark and far away—
I wonder if things really do
 Grow up at night and shrink by day?

FOR I dream sometimes, just as clear,
 I'm bigger than the biggest men—
Then mother says, "Wake up, my dear!"
 And I'm a little boy again.

ROMANY GOLD

THERE'S a crackle of brown on the leaf's
 crisp edge
And the goldenrod blooms have begun to
 feather.
We're two jolly vagabonds under a hedge
By the dusty road together.

COULD an emperor boast such a house as
 ours,
The sky for a roof and for couch the clover?
Does he sleep as well under silken flowers
As we, when the day is over?

HE sits at ease at his table fine
 With the richest of meat and drink before
 him.
I eat my crust with your hand in mine,

ROMANY GOLD (continued)

And your eyes are cups of a stronger wine
Than any his steward can pour him.

WHAT if the autumn days grow cold?
Under one cloak we can brave the
weather.
A comrade's troth is the Romany gold,
And we're taking the road together.

THE ROMANY SIGN

O VER the hills with the Romany train
Through the sweet wet woods and the
whispering rain,
Looking back through veils of gray
To the roofs of the town where we paused
to-day.

There in the crowded market-place
Is a Romany heart with a Gorgio face.
Where did you find the heart of my clan
Under the shadow of roof and spire?
Did your mother dream of a Romany man
In the house of your Gorgio sire?
Even so shall you dream of me
When you light the hearth for a fair white
bride—

Of a path untrodden, a door untried,
And an hour that is never to be.

I have set my patteran

THE ROMANY SIGN (continued)

Deep in your Romany heart.

I broke a branch from my tree of life

Where the sweetest buds had begun to
start—

And they never shall bloom, but they never
shall fall.

Wide are the ways of your feet and mine—

It's the market-place for the Gorgio face,

And the roof, and the spire, and the fair
white wife.

I'm over the hills with the Romany chal,

And there's never a fire shall warm us twain

The width of a world apart.

But—what is a world to the Romany heart

That follows the Romany sign?

CALYPSO

WANDERER, we must part—so the gods
decree.

You must go again to Ithaca.

The cold green waves shall wash you of
the memory of me,

Breaking on the coast of Ithaca.

Built we a house of dreams, beautiful in
seeming,

But for those the Thunderer wakes, there
is no more dreaming.

Go now, spread your sail, turn your prow
to sea—

Yonder lies the way to Ithaca.

THEIRS is to obey, whom the gods com-
mand—

Holy is the hearth in Ithaca.

Home and harvest are waiting for your
hand—

CALYPSO (continued)

Fruitful are the fields of Ithaca.
Love the life you chose while it still is yours
for living,
Lest the gods take back again the treasures
of their giving.
Passes our joy like our footprints in the
sand—
Granite are the cliffs of Ithaca.

I HAVE sent him back, at the gods'
decree—
I have sent him back to Ithaca.
Never will I walk again beside the twi-
light sea
On the shore that looks toward Ithaca
Lest the wind should bring to him a
breath of days gone by,
Of the beauty and the sorrow of his
madness that was I. . . .
Peace to him and his, O Zeus! I ask
no more of thee—
Peace upon that home in Ithaca.

HUEY

I cannot understand the things I see,
All that I feel I never can express.
What would men have for me but mockery
If I should try to live among them?

THE PIXY

Yes—

We are shut out together, you and I—
No fault of ours.

HUEY

I let the world go by.
What lovelier than the world you make for me?

THE PIXY

Yet I would have your heart's horizon be
Greater than any love of mine could span
When you are grown a man.

HUEY

I am a man.
Look in my eyes and see.

(She is sitting on the step of the house, and he on the ground at her feet. He rises to his knees; she bends forward and looks into his eyes. The gladness dies from her face, and she speaks drearily.)

THE PIXY

So I must lose you too.
What has this love of yours to ask of me?

HUEY

Nothing.

THE PIXY

You ask for nothing? Is that true?

HUEY (still kneeling before her as before an altar)

My love asks of you
Not even the right to be.
Out of eternity it came.
You did not light, you cannot still
The white insistence of its flame.
I love you by the sovereign will
Of God who is the power to love.
Long as my soul, that love must live.
What should I ask of you? Above
All asking you have given me.

THE PIXY

(The moonlight has come into the glade, and lights the joy of her face.)

Above all asking I can give
You who ask nothing. Truth is sweeter far
Than any dream. See how the holy touch
Of the white moon transforms the shadowy
wood.
The change is such
Here in myself who had not understood

That such a love could be.
Still you seem my son—and yet far more.
Those trees are lovely as they were before
The moonlight laid on them that shining grace,
Yet now—

HUEY

Ah, now transfigured is this place.
The world will never call to me again.
I shall no more regret
That I am set
Apart from other men—

THE PIXY (laying her arm about his shoulder and her
cheek to his)

We are shut out together, you and I.

(There is the sound of steps coming along the path.
She rises and stands full in the moonlight as Will enters.)

WILL

Lyliard! (she vanishes into the shadows)

I thought I saw her standing there,
The moonlight on her hair,
Just as I saw her twenty years ago.

HUEY (rises and comes to him frankly, with out-
stretched hand)

You are a lover too—I know, I know!

WILL (without showing surprise at Huey's speech,
quietly)
I lost her, lad.

HUEY

Perhaps you asked too much.
Had you asked nothing, only given her
All that you were,—
I—I see it here—but cannot tell—

WILL

I think you touch
My trouble all too well.
Why do you let the village think you dumb?

HUEY

I see too much—and then no words will come.
Better live here and never speak at all
Except to those who understand.

WILL

You mean—

HUEY (touching the Tree with a smile)

The kindly folk in green,
The birds and beasts who know me when I call,
The sea, the stars, the winds, and one beside
Who is the soul of all the world to me.

WILL

So speaks a lover of his bride.

HUEY

I am not wedded, nor shall ever be
Save to a dream.

WILL

Aye—so it is with me.

HUEY

I know. I heard you speaking here to-day
With Uncle Saundry. And you said you knew
My father and my mother.

WILL

We all grew

Together here. I mind how when I went,
Margaret, your mother, said to me, "My friend,
Come back to Cornwall at your wandering's
end."

Well, I came back—too late ever to see
My friends on earth again,
But not too late for you.

HUEY

And this is then
Your wandering's end?

WILL

Not so.

My place is over yonder. When I go
Will you go with me?

HUEY

No—ah, no, no, no!

I must stay here.

WILL

But why?

HUEY

I love it so,

And fear the world. . . .

What goodness in your eyes!

It shines through many sorrows. You are
wise—

WILL

Not wise nor good, my boy, only a man
Who lives among his kind as best he can
And tries to make the world a better dwelling
For those who shall come after. That's the soil
On which is built the buying and the selling,
The pleasure and the tumult and the toil
That we call life, and those whose hearts are
found

Empty are poor, and those who grip that ground
With roots that hold, are rich.

HUEY

And that is living.

WILL

Come you and help me live it.

HUEY

Help—you?

WILL

Dear lad, the world has need of such
Clear eyes, and of the soul without a smutch
That lights them. As for me, I live alone—
Though I have comrades numberless,
You seem to me my very own—

HUEY

Had I a life like other men for giving,
It is to you, true man, that I would give it.
My place is here—here I have happiness,
Such happiness as those who share the pain
And burdens of your world can never know.
Oh, your eyes hurt me! but their pleading's vain.
I have no choice—be merciful and go.
Let me be happy once again
As I was before you brought
The vision of a world of men
To vex my thought—
The wrongs I cannot understand—

WILL

I cannot understand them—but I fight them,
And some day greater souls than ours shall
right them.

For the Great Battle, boy, give me your hand.
We're made for deeper things than happiness—
And then, some say it's in the world to find
Even among the struggle and the stress.
Will you not come?

HUEY (flings himself on the step of the house and hides
his face on his arms)

I would I had been blind
As well as dumb!

WILL (bends over him. As he does so, the spray of the
Tree falls from his coat)

Take time—your mind may change. I lodge to-
night

With Uncle Saundry; this is not good-by.
Sometime we shall be comrades, you and I,
In the great fight

Whether you come with me or not. I know
Some day your soul will drive and you will go,
But—I would have you side by side with me
If that may be.
Good-night.

HEARTS AWAKE

(Will goes down the path; as he disappears in the thicket, the Pixy comes from the shadow and stands looking after him. There is a pause. Huey raises his head from his arms, and seeing the little spray of leaves that Will has dropped, he takes it in his hand.)

HUEY

He wore this—it will be all
Of him that I shall have to keep
Except those tears that will not fall
In the long nights bare of sleep.
Leaves of the tree
Of knowledge—knowledge what a man might
 be.
Why should a crippled spirit learn
Of powers he can never gain?
Peace he loses past return
And all his profit is but pain.

THE PIXY

So said I, once—and thought I could forget—
But there is no forgetting.
And yet, my dear—and yet—
Would I if I could? That pain has grown
My life's most precious stone
And all else but the setting.

(Huey looks up at her; he clenches his hands, shaken by a silent inward struggle; then, lifting a fold of her robe to his lips, he rises to his knee)

HUEY

How that may be, I guess—and I shall know
When I am gone.

THE PIXY (stooping over him)

Huey—you will not go?

HUEY

How easy it would be for me to stay
Did I not love you so!

THE PIXY

He is not a dream like you and me—
Following him, you would but lose your way!

HUEY

My love for you is all reality.
Though I have lived a dream until to-day,
In my soul's troubled twilight, that shines clear.
I could not face the village—I took cover
In solitude and silence for my fear
And sad bewilderment—but, oh, my dear,
How can you have a coward for your lover?
I am afraid of all to which he calls me—

THE PIXY

So well, so cruelly well I understand!

HUEY

Yet I must go, no matter what befalls me.
How could I bear your touch upon my hand
That shirked its effort at a man's true part?
Although I fail and fall and go astray,
Venture I must—the fire is in my heart.
Dear love—I do not love you, if I stay.
Tears—your tears upon my brow!
They are a king's anointing to me. Now
I can be strong!

(He springs erect, triumphant. She touches her eyes
incredulously, and sees that he has spoken truly.)

THE PIXY (tremulously at first, then with glad
strength)

My people cannot weep—
What are these tears? To the elements must
yield
Her being wholly—with the magic, end. . . .
It is the only way.
You dare to live for me—shall I deny
You power to live because I fear to die?
Death—is it death when I can live in you,
When I, the soulless, pass into your soul
And give you to the world a perfect whole?
I shall be part of all you think and do.

H E A R T S A W A K E

You leave me? No—I shall be with you still
In the strong metal of your tempered will,
In the white passion of your purity,
In the clear wonder of your children's eyes—
God grant that love and home for you may be!
By these my tears upon your forehead wet
And by my breath upon your lips, we rise
To God together through eternity.

(She touches her eyes, then lays her hand on his forehead)

Water to the brow that you may know.

(He takes her reverently in his arms; she lifts her face to his)

Air to the lips that you may speak.

(As his lips meet hers, a cloud dims the moonlight. She draws back slowly, taking the spray of leaves from his hand.)

You are going now to him. Give these to me—
I do not fear them now. Leaves of the tree
Of knowledge—knowledge what a soul may
be. . . .

(The shadow deepens to darkness. There is a moment's silence—broken by his steps as he goes away.)

Welcome darkness, if your way be bright!

HEARTS AWAKE

(The cloud passes, and the moon shines out again in full splendor; her shadowy garment has slipped from her and she stands alone in pure white, the leaves clasped to her breast, her face lifted and transfigured with wondering joy.)

It is not darkness—it is light . . . all light. . . .

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